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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Three Activists to Share 2008 Gruber International Women's Rights Prize for Advancing Gender Equality

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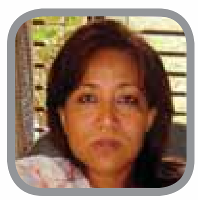
July 8, 2008, New York, NY – The Peter and Patricia Gruber Foundation today announced that it will award the 2008 Women's Rights Prize to three courageous activists who, at great risk to their own safety, have led successful efforts to advance women's rights in their respective societies.

Yanar Mohammed



Sapana Pradhan Malla

Dr. Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian

Yanar Mohammed – a co-founder of Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq, has become the focal point for women's rights activism in Iraq. She is publisher of Al Mousawat, which calls for full equality for women, and has opened women's shelters and safe houses to protect women threatened by domestic abuse and what are referred to as honor killings. Her activities against trafficking of young women are an effort to save them from a lifetime of sexual slavery. She teaches women activists how to confront intolerance and regularly advocates equality for women on Iraqi radio and television.

Sapana Pradhan Malla – a leader in securing legal reforms protecting the fundamental reproductive and property rights of women in Nepal, is president of the Forum for Women, Law & Development. A practicing lawyer before the Supreme Court of Nepal, she was a driving force behind the passage of legislation to criminalize marital rape and in the drafting of a Gender Equality Amendment Act and a model Human Trafficking Act.

Dr. Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian – a leading feminist scholar, therapist and activist, has worked to end domestic violence against Palestinian women, particularly what have been referred to as honor killings. A criminologist and specialist in women's rights, she has lectured around the world on issues of violence against women in the Arab world and elsewhere. Living in Israel, she has trained women activists in the West Bank and Gaza and established a hotline for reporting abuse.

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The Women's Rights Prize will be awarded in a ceremony this fall celebrating the achievements of the recipients, who will share the $500,000 prize.

"These women inspire us as they courageously fight for gender equality under the most difficult conditions of war and armed conflict – conditions that trigger deeply misogynistic ideologies and practices supported by nationalist and religious fundamentalism," said Pinar Ilkkaracan, co-recipient of the 2007 Gruber Foundation Women's Rights Prize and member of the 2008 Women's Rights Prize Selection Advisory Board. "Through their vision and dedication, these prize recipients have become the world's conscience in the struggle for justice, peace, and equality between women and men."

Yanar Mohammed - graduated from Baghdad University in 1984 and received a Master's degree in Architecture in 1993. Although her work on behalf of Iraqi women has placed her life in danger, Yanar Mohammed continues to believe that the world that she and all Iraqi women are entitled to is a world worth fighting for. She is the founder of Defense of Iraqi Women's Rights, which advocates full equality for Iraqi women through active involvement in political debate. In 2003, she co-founded Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq to help achieve full equality for women in post-war Iraq. The publisher of Al Mousawat, a newspaper calling for full equality for women, Mohammed has opened two women's shelters (in Baghdad and Kirkuk) and several safe houses to protect women threatened by domestic abuse and what is referred to as honor killing. The shelters have protected numerous women who, under fundamentalist practice and tribal law, face threats to their lives. Since August 2005, she has offered courses to instruct women activists in how to confront local tradition, tribalism, and religious intolerance. She dreams of giving a voice to Iraqi women through their own television channel, embodying a new wave of progressive feminism that can spread throughout the Middle East.
(A complete biography is available at http://www.gruberprizes.org.)

Sapana Pradhan Malla earned a Bachelor of Law degree from Tribhuvan University and a Masters of Law degree from Delhi University. A practicing lawyer before the Supreme Court of Nepal, she has been involved in almost all leading public litigation for equality in that country, including cases involving legalization of abortion, criminalization of marital rape, and equality in marriage and family law. Due in large part to her efforts, more than 64 discriminatory laws of Nepal have been struck down. The Human Trafficking Act that she helped draft has become a legal model for the region. Pradhan Malla was instrumental in securing the most recent legal reforms protecting the fundamental reproductive and property rights of women in Nepal. She has published extensively on the legal status of women in Nepal and has brought several landmark cases to Nepal's Supreme Court. A member of Nepal's Constituent Assembly, she is a strong advocate of women's participation in the political process and, as a result of her efforts and influence, women now make up one-third of the Assembly. She is dedicated to

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ensuring a comprehensive women's rights agenda within the constitutional framework. Pradhan Malla is president of the Forum for Women, Law & Development, a non-governmental organization whose mission is to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women in Nepal and protect and promote human rights through research and public education, advocacy, legal aid and litigation. She is also vice president of the Legal Aid Consultancy Center and promoter of the Public Interest Litigation Forum.
(A complete biography is available at http://www.gruberprizes.org.)

Dr. Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian is a criminologist, a clinical social worker, and a specialist in human rights and women's rights. She initiated the first hotline for reporting abuse in the West Bank and Gaza at the Women's Center for Legal Aid and Counseling. The Center offers advocacy for Palestinian women in situations of domestic violence and the cultural practice of what has been termed honor killing. She consulted with Human Rights Watch on its most recent report on violence against Palestinian women in Israel and with the UNIFEM division of the United Nations. Dr. Shalhoub-Kevorkian is a Senior Lecturer of Criminology and Social Work at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and a visiting Professor of Law and Women's Studies at USC and UCLA in the United States. She conducted academic research on the multiple forms of violence inflicted upon Palestinian women and girls. A prolific author, Dr. Shalhoub-Kevorkian has written extensively on domestic violence, the criminal justice response to violence against Palestinian women, militarization and violence against women in conflict zones, child abuse, and women in Palestinian society. She has published over 40 journal articles and book chapters and has authored or coauthored three books, with a fourth book, Militarization and Violence Against Women in Conflict Zones: A Palestinian Case Study, due out in the fall of 2008.
(A complete biography is available at http://www.gruberprizes.org.)

In addition to the cash award, Ms. Mohammed, Ms. Pradhan Malla, and Dr. Shalhoub-Kevorkian will each receive a gold medal.

The official citation reads:

The 2008 Gruber Women's Rights Prize is proudly presented to: Yanar Mohammed, Sapana Pradhan Malla, and Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, three activists devoted to enhancing women's rights and empowering women under the most difficult conditions of armed conflict and war.

Yanar Mohammed, co-founder of the Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq (OWFI), for fighting tirelessly to stop the eradication of women's rights in Iraq. OWFI is a women's organization that has continued to speak out openly for women's rights against all odds.

Sapana Pradhan Malla, a member of Nepal's Constituent Assembly, for fighting to include women's human rights in the constitution and, as a member of the Forum for Women, Law &

Development (FWLD), for leading the successful effort to decriminalize abortion and to criminalize marital rape.

Dr. Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, a Palestinian feminist activist and researcher, for concentrating on sexual abuse and femicide, a term she coined for the abuse that puts women in a state of living death during times of war.

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Additional Information

The Women's Rights Prize of the **Peter and Patricia Gruber Foundation** is presented to an individual or group that has made significant contributions, often at great personal or professional risk, to furthering the rights of women and girls in any area and to advancing public awareness of the need for gender equality to achieve a just world.

Members of the Committee that selected the 2008 Women's Rights Prize recipients:

- **Sakiko Fukuda-Parr**, The New School—International Affairs, United States
- **Pinar Ilkkaracan**, Women for Women's Human Rights-New Ways, Turkey
- **Cecilia Medina Quiroga**, University of Chile, Chile
- **Navanethem Pillay**, International Criminal Court, The Hague
- **Peter Rosenblum**, Columbia Law School, United States
- **Zainab Salbi**, Women for Women International, United States
- **Sakena Yacoobi**, Afghan Institute of Learning, Afghanistan

Laureates of the Gruber Foundation Women's Rights Prize:

2007

Ms. Pinar Ilkkaracan – recognized both individually and for her leadership in two organizations that she co-founded; helped reform Turkish laws to advance gender equality and advocated for sexual and reproductive rights

Women for Women's Human Rights – played a critical role in advancing women's civil and reproductive rights and raising awareness about gender-based violence

The Coalition for Sexual and Bodily Rights in Muslim Societies – helped shatter myths about customs and religious practices and united women's rights advocates from 14 countries in an effort to protect women and girls

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2006

Unión Nacional de Mujeres Guatemaltecas (UNMG) – a leader in working toward peace-building and equitable participation in Guatemala
Sweatshop Watch – strong advocate for the economic and political rights of migrant workers in the US
Judge Cecilia Medina Quiroga – advanced the rights of women through international law

2005

Shan Women's Action Network – dedicated to ending the oppression of minority women along the Thai-Burma border
The Women's League of Burma – a multi-ethnic umbrella organization committed to empowering women and enabling their participation in the democracy movement

2004

Professor Sakena Yacoobi – founded a grassroots program within the International Rescue Committee that quadrupled the number of Afghan girls enrolled in school
Afghan Institute of Learning (AIL) – provides health and human rights education to 350,000 women and girls in Afghanistan and in Pakistan's refugee camps

2003

Judge Navanethem Pillay – the first black woman to serve on the bench of the High Court of South Africa; strong advocate for human rights and women's issues
Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe – an umbrella organization comprising over 40 women's groups across Rwanda; dedicated to achieving peace and eradicating discrimination

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The Peter and Patricia Gruber International Prize Program honors contemporary individuals in the fields of Cosmology, Genetics, Neuroscience, Justice and Women's Rights, whose groundbreaking work provides new models that inspire and enable fundamental shifts in knowledge and culture. The Selection Advisory Boards choose individuals whose contributions in their respective fields advance our knowledge, potentially have a profound impact on our lives, and, in the case of the Justice and Women's Rights Prizes, demonstrate courage and commitment in the face of significant obstacles.

The nomination form for the 2009 awards and additional information about nomination requirements and selection criteria may be found on the Foundation web site at
www.gruberprizes.org/Nominations/Nominations.php

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The Peter and Patricia Gruber Foundation honors and encourages educational excellence, social justice and scientific achievements that better the human condition. For more information about Foundation guidelines and priorities, please visit www.gruberprizes.org.

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For more information on the 2008 Gruber Prizes, email media@gruberprizes.org or contact Bernetia Akin of the Gruber Foundation at (340) 775-8035.Media materials and additional background information on the Gruber Prizes can be found at our online newsroom: www.gruberprizes.org/Press.php

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